

By Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. FEINGOLD):

S. 3008. A bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 to require, as a condition of receipt of Federal funding, that States waive immunity to suit for certain violations of that Act, and to affirm the availability of certain suits for injunctive relief to ensure compliance with that Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HUTCHINSON (for himself, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. WELLSTONE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. HOLLINGS, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 3009. A bill to provide funds to the National Center for Rural Law Enforcement; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY:

S. 3010. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve procedures for the determination of the inability of veterans to defray expenses of necessary medical care, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 3011. An original bill to increase, effective as of December 1, 2000, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans; from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 3012. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to impose criminal and civil penalties for false statements and failure to file reports concerning defects in foreign motor vehicle products, and to require the timely provision of notice of such defects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S.J. Res. 51. A joint resolution authorizing special awards to veterans of service as United States Navy Armed Guards during World War I or World War II; to the Committee on Armed Services.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. Res. 348. A resolution to express the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of the Treasury, acting through the United States Customs Service, should conduct investigations into, and take such other actions as are necessary to prevent, the unreported importation of ginseng products into the United States from foreign countries; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. HUTCHISON (for herself and Mr. GRAMM):

S. Con. Res. 134. Concurrent resolution designating September 8, 2000, as Galveston Hurricane National Remembrance Day; considered and agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated, on August 25, 2000.

By Mr. LUGAR:

S. 3001. A bill to amend the United States Grain Standards Act to extend the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture to collect

fees, extend the authorization of appropriations, and improve the administration of that Act, to amend the United States Warehouse Act to authorize the issuance of electronic warehouse receipts, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, placed on the calendar.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. 3005. A bill to require country origin labeling of all forms of ginseng; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

GINSENG TRUTH IN LABELING ACT OF 2000

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a package of legislation (S. 3005 and S. Res. 348) that addresses the increased amount of smuggled and mis-labeled ginseng entering this country.

This legislation provides for some common sense reforms that would require country-of-origin labeling for ginseng products, and express the Sense of the Senate that customs should put a stop to the flow of smuggled ginseng into the United States. My legislation will push for stricter enforcement of ginseng importation and allow consumers the information they need to determine the origin of the ginseng they buy.

SMUGGLING-LABELING PROBLEM

Mr. President, Chinese and Native American cultures have used ginseng for thousands of years for herbal and medicinal purposes.

In America, ginseng is experiencing a newfound popularity, and I am proud to say that my home state of Wisconsin is playing a central role in ginseng's resurgence.

Wisconsin produces 97 percent of the ginseng grown in the United States, and 85 percent of the country's ginseng is grown in Marathon County.

The ginseng industry is an economic boon to Marathon County, as well as an example of the high quality for which Wisconsin's agriculture industry is known.

Wisconsin ginseng commands a premium price in world markets because it is considered to be of the highest quality and because it has a lower pesticide and chemical content.

With a huge market for this high-quality ginseng overseas, and growing popularity for the ancient root here at home, Wisconsin's ginseng industry should have a prosperous future ahead.

Unfortunately, the outlook for ginseng farmers is marred by a serious problem—smuggled and mislabeled ginseng. Wisconsin ginseng is considered so superior to ginseng grown abroad that smugglers will go to great lengths to label ginseng grown in Canada or Asia as "Wisconsin-grown."

Here's how the switch takes place: Smugglers take Asian or Canadian-grown ginseng and ship it to plants in China, allegedly to have the ginseng sorted into various grades.

While the sorting process is itself a legitimate part of distributing ginseng, smugglers often use it as a ruse to switch Wisconsin ginseng with the Asian or Canadian ginseng considered inferior by consumers.

The smugglers know that while Chinese-grown ginseng has a retail value of about \$5-\$6 per pound, while Wisconsin-grown ginseng is valued at roughly \$16-\$20 per pound.

To make matters even tougher for Wisconsin's ginseng farmers, there is no accurate way of testing ginseng to determine where it was grown, other than testing for pesticides that are legal in Canada and China but are banned in the United States.

And in some cases, smugglers can even find ways around the pesticide tests. A recent ConsumerLab.com study confirmed that much of the ginseng sold in the U.S. contained harmful chemicals and metals, such as lead and arsenic.

And that's because the majority of Ginseng sold in the U.S. originates from countries with lower pesticide standards, so it's vitally important that consumers know which ginseng is really grown in Wisconsin.

CONSUMER/PRODUCER IMPACT

For the sake of ginseng farmers and consumers, the U.S. Senate must crack down on smuggled and mislabeled ginseng.

Without adequate labeling, consumers have no way of knowing the most basic information about the ginseng they purchase—where it was grown, what quality or grade it is, or whether it contains dangerous pesticides.

The country of origin labeling is a simple but effective way to enable consumers to make an informed decision. And putting the U.S. Senate on record in support of cracking down on ginseng smuggling is an important first step toward putting an end to the illegal ginseng trade.

The lax enforcement of smuggled ginseng also puts our producers on an unfair playing field. The mixing of superior Wisconsin ginseng with lower quality foreign ginseng root penalizes the grower and eliminates the incentive to provide the consumer with a superior product.

Mr. President, we must give ginseng growers the support they deserve by implementing country-of-origin labeling that lets consumers make informed choices about the ginseng that they consume.

We must ensure when ginseng consumers reach for a quality ginseng product—such as Wisconsin grown ginseng—that they are getting the real thing, not a cheap imitation.

By Mr. ASHCROFT:

S. 3006. A bill to remove civil liability barriers surrounding donating fire equipment to volunteer fire companies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.